

# Building towards cleaner water:



**Cost-effective ways  
to protect our water  
when building or  
remodeling a home**

**When remodeling your home or building an addition, why not make a few simple (and low cost) changes to help protect lakes, rivers and groundwater?**

- ⇒ To reduce stormwater runoff without spending a dime, direct new downspouts into a garden or the lawn and away from pavement.
- ⇒ When redoing your driveway or adding a patio, angle it slightly so that water runs off it into vegetated areas where the water can be absorbed.
- ⇒ Before laying new sod, till the soil in your yard deeply to reduce compaction and increase infiltration. Also consider replacing disturbed sections of your lawn with native plants, shrubs or trees instead of sod. They are lower maintenance, require less watering, and absorb more rainwater than turf.

## Take the extra step!

Replacing or installing a driveway? Consider using **porous pavement**. Water soaks right through it, eliminating runoff.



Photo by University  
of Minnesota

Reduce erosion and drainage problems in your yard with a **raingarden**. They are low maintenance and help keep lakes clean.



Photo by Rice Creek  
Watershed District

Lower your water bill by installing **rain barrels** under downspouts to capture rooftop runoff that can be used to water your yard.



Photo by Washington  
Conservation District

Don't know where to begin? Call your local Soil and Water Conservation District. Staff can provide technical assistance, make recommendations and connect you with local grant programs.

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## Erosion and Sediment Control

If you are building a new home or undertaking a remodeling project that disturbs soil in your yard, it is your responsibility to install temporary erosion and sediment controls to ensure that dirt is not washed into storm sewers or nearby waterways. Depending on the size of your project, you may be required to submit a Sediment and Erosion Control Plan.



A sediment control log, such as the one shown above, captures dirt and debris before it washes away. Photo by Washington Conservation District.

Temporary erosion controls include:

- ◆ Silt fence
- ◆ Sediment control logs
- ◆ Wood or straw mulches
- ◆ Compost with seed
- ◆ Erosion control blankets, and
- ◆ Temporary seeding

When your project is complete, establish permanent vegetation in your yard as soon as possible, either by using sod or grass seed, or by planting flowers and shrubs with shredded wood mulch as cover.

For erosion control advice, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District.

## Pollution Prevention

Your home construction project can create a lot of junk! Be sure to dispose of construction debris, yard waste and hazardous materials properly so that they don't pollute local water resources.

### Concrete Wash

It is illegal to dump concrete wash into streets and ditches or to let it run into nearby water bodies. Dump concrete wash in a contained area where it can dry out or use a concrete washout service.

### Construction Waste

During construction, keep debris away from the street and under cover so that it is not washed away by rain. Dispose of it at:

### Yard Waste

It is illegal to dump yard waste such as grass, leaves, brush and stumps in your regular trash or in nearby wetlands. Go to:

### Household Hazardous Waste

Dispose of paints, thinners, solvents, cleaners, wood preservatives and other remodeling and repair wastes at: